

Bishop Brizgys About the Situation in Lithuania

At the monthly meeting of the members of the Lithuanian Chamber of Commerce on February 13 in the Darius-Girenas room in Chicago, Bishop Brizgys spoke on the present situation in Lithuania. Bishop Brizgys who spent about two months at the Ecumenical Council in Rome spoke of the talks he had with other delegates from Lithuania, Poland, Czechoslovakia and otherscountries.

The general impression made by the speech was that there still exists in Lithuania a national spirit and that Lithuankans try by all means to remain Lithuanian. Lithuanians actively oppose (are strictly against) the bringing in of Russian people to colonize Lithuania, they take care of their own national and historical monuments. In most of Lithuania the Russians are considered the enslavers and receive no respect from the people for this. Even the former Lithuanian ideological Communists have now discovered that the Russians worry not about Communism but Pan-Slavism. There is a wide gap as far as confidence is concerned between the lower Lithuanian officials and the higher Russian authorities. The speaker stated that many of his readers would be astounded to hear that not a few Lithuanian Communists are sincerely working for the good of the country.

(ensembles)  
Many Lithuanian groups/are strictly of a Lithuanian character.

Lithuanian girls avoid marriage with Russians. Immediately after the war when much of the Lithuanian youth had joined the partisans or had perished in the war and there were more women than men, marriages with Russians took place. However, from most of these marriages no good resulted since the Russians proved themselves unreliable (disloyal). The Lithuanian girls don't marry Russians also for patriotic reasons.

The Lithuanians hold American and Great Britian politics to be two-faced and unreliable and they expect nothing good from these countries. They expect much however from a free European Federation.

The Bishop talked considerably about the past partizan activities in Lithuania where many lives were sacrificed/ He stressed that even today the Russians don't trust the Lithuanians.(as well as the Latvians and Estonians) are not accepted in military institutes and soldiers who are required to serve in the Red Army are not allowed to serve in Lithuania but are sent to Russia.

The speaker, contrary to many "know-it-all's" who speak on present Lithuania,

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refrained from leaning too much to one side or the other. Although he had asked his audience to stamp with their feet if they should tire of his speech and then spoke for about 50 minutes, no one took advantage of this request.

At the beginning of his talk, Bishop Brizgys expressed his opinion about ~~the~~ Lithuanianism in America. "I do not see any reason to be greatly pessimistic. In America there are many more good Lithuanians than one sees at various meetings. The Lithuanian spirit in America is not in such a bad situation as some say..... Perhaps I am wrong on this."

Vienybe, 22 Feb 63

(Remainder of article deals with speeches by other guests.)